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Identity through Caricature Art in Egypt

Mona Abdulmoniem Ahmed Alwaraky [1]

[1]*Instructor at the Faculty of Fine Arts, Helwan University*

Abstract

Can a normal individual learn more about a country's identity through art and rather a type as simple as caricature art? How do identity and caricature art relate to one another? Exhibited art often faces similar questions. The term 'identity' mainly refers to a first impression formulated in relation to a nation and is often linked to a piece of land. A complete picture of a nation's identity cannot be simply formed as involved are components, complexities, and even contradictions. No specific concept is involved or implemented in the process but rather an integrated system of data with physical, psychological, moral, and social aspects along its lines. This system and induced spirit is embodied in the interiors of a place to give a sense of continuity and distinction. In other words, identity separates the physical from the psychological. The concept of identity encompasses a set of symbolic meanings, spiritual and cultural, that is accumulated over time to give a sense of belonging to the individuals living in a certain place. As a result, a sense of loyalty and pride is passed on to the people making them aware of their social environments and cultural rights which could be expressed through caricature art to reflect their experienced identities. Caricature art is a simplified language, usually embodying a scene from public and everyday life, used by a 'watani' (Patriotic) individual to express his or her identity within the framework of sarcastic comedy. The identity of the Egyptian is the product of civilized movements by Egyptians through the ages.

1. Introduction

Can a normal individual learn more about a country's identity through art and rather a type as simple as caricature art? How do identity and caricature art relate to one another? Exhibited art often faces similar questions. The term 'identity' mainly refers to a first impression formulated in relation to a nation and is often linked to a piece of land. A complete picture of a nation's identity cannot be simply formed as involved are components, complexities, and even contradictions. No specific concept is involved or implemented in the process but rather an integrated system of data with physical, psychological, moral, and social aspects along its lines. This system and induced spirit is embodied in the interiors of a place to give a sense of continuity and distinction. In other words, identity seperates the physical from the psychological. The concept of identity encompasses a set of symbolic meanings, spiritual and cultural, that is accumulated over time to give a sense of belonging to the individuals living in a certain place. As a result, a sense of loyalty and pride is passed on to the people making them aware of their social environments and cultural rights which could be expressed through caricature art to reflect their experienced identities. Caricature art is a simplified language, usually embodying a scene from public and everyday life, used by a 'watani' (Patriotic) individual to express his or her identity within the framework of sarcastic comedy. The identity of the Egyptian is the product of civilized movements by Egyptians through the ages.

The goal of this Research:

This paper aims to shed light on caricature art as one of the most important expressive arts and the identity of the society through a group of fine lines with simple intellectual depth. This forms the identity of a society as a whole through the presentation of some of the models and analyses.

This Approach of this Research:

This research follows the historic analytical approach inspired by the works of Egyptian artists. Through their work, we can identify the extent by which they are influenced by their identity and the extent by which this is evident in their work.

The Limits of the Search:

This research is determined to study the models of the work of Egyptian artists during the twentieth century to review the historic and artistic in stages in Egypt throughout this century.

Defining Identity:

The concept of identity is a Western concept that our Arabic language has only recently known, and the spread of the concept of identity dates back to modern Arab thought by the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the twentieth century.

Identity is a term used to describe the concept of singularity and its expression of individuality and its relationship with groups (such as national identity or cultural identity). Identity is also a feature that distinguishes something from others or groups from others. The elements of identity are dynamic and one of those elements can bring out another at one stage or the other.

Identity is an integrated system of physical, psychological, moral and social data that involves a process of cognitive integration and is characterized by its unity that is embodied in the inner spirit that involves the sense of identity and feeling. Identity is a unit of inner feelings that includes a sense of continuity differentiation, permanence and central effort. This means that identity is a unit of integrated physical and psychological elements that makes a person different from others and makes him or her recognize his or her own uniqueness.

Therefore, they involve primarily symbolic, spiritual and cultural meanings that give the individual a sense of belonging to a larger body and create loyalty and pride in this larger body. However, some scholars differed in defining the concept of identity. This is because the term "identity" is said to mean several meanings. It is also linked to several complex subjects. Identities are acquired through social upbringing and they are produced and re-produced through interaction. Hence, the concept of identity is not considered a final, complete picture or a specific concept.

Identity and the Environment:

When we talk about identity, we look for the roots and origins that carry the characteristics of a people. These characteristics influence people's character and behavior throughout generations even though some of them are borrowed standards, values and principles emerging in an environment other than their own. Identity is linked to the environment, including history and geography, and it develops with the development of the ages, but does not lose its roots.

The identity of Egypt:

The identity of Egypt is the product of a civilized movement by the Egyptians through the ages, which is the result of interaction between continuity and change. In all cases, Egypt absorbed and digested all these differences and re-produced them again, both on the material or moral level through the arts, architecture and literature, etc. Egypt's history includes several different civilizations with their own unique cultures and religions. The identity of Egypt includes some aspects of all these historical civilizations, cultures, and religions.

Characteristics of Personal identity:

One cannot have a distinctive character without a single identity. A person's appearance shows a great deal of his or her essence, but their identity and lifestyles give them their distinctive characteristics. The private identity becomes the individual's, whether it's the personal or a group identity, that reflects on the identity of society as a whole. When we discuss identity through art, we look for the tangible ways that highlighted the concept of identity and was also a result of it. In this paper, the researcher attempts to shed light on the concept of individual identity through discussing the art of caricatures.

Caricature Art:

Egyptian archeologists confirm that the art of caricature dates back to the Pharaonic times and that it is old in the ancient Egyptian civilization. The comics that ridicule and criticize the political and social situations lead back to thousands of years. In modern times, it has witnessed a more positive and interactive role between art and civilization and more profoundly since the seventeenth century until the twentieth century AD. It has emerged from the movement of history and it was the most modern and diverse at all levels of intellectual scientific, literary, philosophical, religious, political and other, which led to the reflection of these variations in turn on art and philosophy and the value of aesthetics. Despite the evolution of caricature art ever since the modernization age up until the twentieth century, caricature art took its current postmodernist form after a period of rapid development occurred in parallel to the time that necessitated the development of photography. Even though the both occurred in the same period, they were not only a qualitative transfer. The process of spreading them was slow and was fought by classical and other artists quickly and this did not only affect the content, but it was not easily accepted by the viewers, which extended to postmodernity. Many schools, trends and tendencies that expressed the spirit of this modern stage have been well expressed with the industrial revolution and the changes that accompanied it.[9] Caricature art entered the modern age and has also achieved a strong presence and has influenced many artists as it depicts human sensations. In order for it to become a universal language, as it can also be considered a language that expresses what is on people's minds, caricature art became relatable to everyone regardless of their language or origin. Caricature is a clear drawing that expresses a certain meaning without words, and if it contains words, then they are part of the drawing and not parts of a commentary on it. It is an art that relies on visuals and it shouldn't rely on tools that are not involved in fine arts, like words, as the meaning does not really reach the audience. Caricature is an art made up of two elements, they are formations represented in drawings and drama presented in a comedic form and despite its simple portrayal, and it is one of the most difficult arts. This type of art carries many meanings of high value to the community with many indirect benefits by providing a critical image of negative situations, but in a simple and smooth way. The word "caricature" represents the characteristics of a person or a subject in order to deliver the idea deliberately using a cynical, exaggerated style. The word caricature means the representation of special characteristics of something aiming to portray a certain meaning in a sarcastic manner. It's a Latin word that means a drawing that brings out flaws and that word is also in the Arabic language meaning sarcastic drawings. It also appears in the English language meaning people, because this art greatly depends on the people that are drawn by the artist, and the meaning or message revolves around that drawn person. In many cases artists deliberately overdraw the lines and exaggerate the character's features in order to portray a certain message. Egypt is considered to be the first Arab country in which the art of caricature has been published. This is due to the press aspect that helped spread this popularity in addition to the nature of the Egyptian people and their inclination. The art of caricature came to express the Egyptian environment and its events through daily appearances. Which led to the divergence into many different directions to cover the aspects of society such as the political aspect of religious social, etc.

Architectural Identity Through Caricature Art:

Each country in the world has historical cities and buildings that express the culture of the surrounding people, which gives each country its own character. It is its own identity and the architectural mark is very important in diagnosing the identity of the city. It is not just buildings but the main pillar in the formation of any city as the identity of a place is not limited to mere architectural forms, but the features of people vary from one country to another to form a formative unit that shapes the identity of the country. The researcher reviews a number of models to illustrate the idea of identity through the art of caricature, which explains how the artist was able to express his or her identity through caricature art illustrated showing the elements of the Egyptian environment using architecture. [10] If someone were to analyze the study of arts from a number of artists, artists will find a general and accurate framework for whatever event takes place in the country because he or she will find that the cartoons analyze and embody this event in all its aspects.

Figure (1) notes in this work that the artist was able to show the identity of the place through the features of this figure in addition to the background of the work, including manifestations that suggest the architectural atmosphere of the Egyptian village.

Figure 1 One of the work of the Artist Ali Tuygan

Figure (2) There is no doubt when you see this cartoon work of the artist, Tuygan, one can sense the atmosphere of the Egyptian village by the artist's drawing of the background of rural architecture, which reveals the features of the atmosphere of the Egyptian countryside. This, in turn, makes use of the expressive features of the simple architectural form of the Egyptian village.

Figure 2 One of the work of the Artist Ali Tuygan

Figure (3) the artist portrayed the Egyptian January 25th revolution of 2011 by putting in elements that symbolize the iconic architectural buildings that make it distinct. The artist also used a background full of architectural features that confirm that the revolution was in Tahrir Square.

Figure 3 a caricature shows the revolution of 25 January the artist Ibrahim Hnetar

Figure (4) In this work, the artist was able to achieve the difficult equation that brought down the barrier between creativity and public taste. This is an art through his own style in dealing with his subjects from daily life. The cultural features in the artistic work became the homogeneous features. Through the successful selection of

architectural symbols of the ancient Egyptian civilization confirm the identity of the Egyptian free zones through successful chosen symbols of distinctive architectural lane old Egyptian.
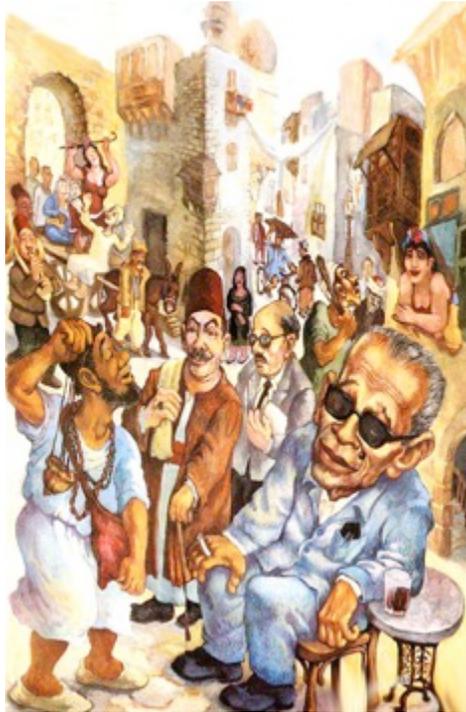

Figure 4 The artist Salah Anaani in 1988

Figure (5) The artist presented a picture inspired by social life in Egypt, dealing with aspects of daily life, but with a quick caricature, and note that he showed the architectural identity of the place by drawing the women and the mosque and the houses that express the personality of the place.

Figure 5 One of the work of the Artist Mohsen Abu abuser from the tales of Gebelawi

Figure (6) The artist in this work can show the Egyptian identity through the use of architectural symbols that represent a mental map of the city to be a key sign and thus reflect the personality of the place.

Figure 6 One of the caricature artist Two Missiles

Figure (7) through which the artist expressed his interest in the conditions of his homeland through his art and he did this using a single color and simple lines in the background of the work to illustrate the Egyptian architectural identity by choosing elements of the distinctive architectural environment. Formal construction as a whole to focus on the expressive value of spaces and blocks and lines.

Figure 7 the work of the Artist Mostafa Hussein

Summary:

The identity of Egypt is the product of a civilized movement by the Egyptians through the ages. It is the result of an interaction between continuity and change. Many cultures have passed through it and in any case managed to assimilate all these different cultures to produce a special character that we see in different types of arts. The researcher tried to find a relationship between identity and the art of caricature and how this art was able through its simple tools to express the identity of the place through the artist's use of the architectural background in the work to be an expression of the culture of the people, it is not just buildings but the main pillar in the formation of a mental map of the place Technician that distinguish it from the other.

Recommendations:

1- The art of caricature is an introduction to the various historical stages that the country is undergoing

2- This art could be a universal language understood by people everywhere

3- Identity is a term used to describe a person's concept and expression of his or her individuality and relationship to another

4- All kinds of arts are a way to enhance identity so that the artist can produce a distinctive work of art with its own character

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